

REMARKS

The cross reference to the related patent has been updated above.

Claims 14 and 23 have been amended above to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. This amendment does not narrow or limit the scope of the claims. On page 7 of the office action the examiner indicated that claims 14 and 23-25 would be allowable if amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Thus, it is believed that claims 14-21 and 23-25 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 36 has been converted from dependent form into independent form. This amendment does not narrow or limit the scope of the claim. In view of the examiner's comments on page 7-8 of the office action, it is believed that claim 36 is now in condition for allowance.

Claims 22 and 26-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiraki et al. (US 6,419,510) in view of EP 1207591. The examiner is requested to reconsider this rejection.

EP 1207591 does not qualify as a reference under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) because it was published on May 22, 2002. Thus, because EP 1207591 was not published more than one year before the filing date of the parent patent application of the present patent application (January 23, 2003), it cannot be used under 35 U.S.C. §103 via 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Therefore, applicant's attorney assumes that the examiner is attempting to use EP 1207591 under 35 U.S.C. §103 via 35 U.S.C. §102(a).

Enclosed is an affidavit from the inventor under 37 C.F.R. 1.131 which establishes that applicant's invention was conceived before the publication date of EP 1207591. The examiner is requested to reconsider her rejection of claims 22 and 26-32 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiraki et al. (US 6,419,510) in view of EP 1207591.

Claims 34, 35, 37 and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Shiraki et al. (US 6,419,510). The examiner is requested to reconsider this rejection.

Claim 34 has been amended above to clarify applicant's claimed invention. In particular, claim 34 claims that the downwardly extending section comprises a deflectable cantilevered section which is deflectable in a direction towards a gap between a main body of the housing and the latch arm, and wherein the deflectable cantilevered section comprises a portion adapted to extend into the gap when the first latch arm is at a home latched position and is prevented from extending into the gap when the latch arm is at the unlatched position. The features of claim 34 are not disclosed or suggested in the art of record. Therefore, claim 34 is patentable and should be allowed.

Claim 37 has been amended above to clarify applicant's claimed invention. In particular, claim 37 claims that the method comprises preventing the interference portion from extending into the gap when the first latch arm is at the unlatched position. The features of claim 37 are not disclosed or suggested in the art of record. Therefore, claim 37 is patentable and should be allowed.

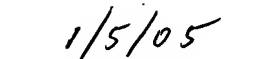
Claim 38 has been amended above to clarify applicant's claimed invention. In particular, claim 38 claims that the step of moving comprises deflecting an interference portion of the CPA member into a gap between a latch of the housing of the electrical connector and a main section of the housing of the electrical connector to prevent the latch from being moved from a latching position to an unlatched position, and the method comprises preventing the interference portion from extending into the gap when the first latch arm is at the unlatched position. The features of claim 38 are not disclosed or suggested in the art of record. Therefore, claim 38 is patentable and should be allowed.

It is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable consideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the Examiner is invited to call applicant's attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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